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LORD ABERDEEN

Aberdeen, George Hamilton Gordon

AND THE

*4th Earl of
Aberdeen - 1860*

AMEER OF BOKHARA:

IN REPLY

TO

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

BY

John
CAPTAIN GROVER, F.R.S.



LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186 STRAND.

—
1845.



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THE First Edition of this Pamphlet was published in the month of August. Copies were immediately sent to the Editor of the "Edinburgh Review," and to the Proprietors, with a letter directing their particular attention to the subject. On the 6th of October a new number of the "Edinburgh Review" appeared, containing an advertisement of the Fourth Edition of the Pamphlet, but without the slightest apology to me, or explanation. As I perceive the "New Quarterly" for this month has taken up my defence, I leave the issue to that "Review" *versus* the "Edinburgh," and return my best thanks to the Editor of the "New Quarterly," and the numerous journals who have so kindly defended me against an anonymous, unprincipled calumniator.

J. G.

*Army and Navy Club,
Oct. 15th, 1845.*

LORD ABERDEEN

AND

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

It is now two years since I openly and publicly charged Lord Aberdeen with having abandoned two British officers, employed in the service of their country on a diplomatic mission; when I accused the Government of having abandoned a third, Lieutenant Wyburd, Lord Aberdeen replied that this officer had been "overlooked," which I take to be an admission of the charge. I have also accused Lord Aberdeen of misleading the public by publishing intelligence received from a suspicious source, encouraging a belief that our envoys had been murdered, and of suppressing intelligence received from a British Minister which contradicted the published statement. Since the publication of my Appeal in 1843, the Committee of the Stoddart and Conolly Fund and myself have had repeated interviews with Lord Aberdeen, and, although his Lordship has complained that I have treated him severely, he has never pretended that I have treated him unjustly, and has not denied the truth of my open and public accusation; I am therefore astonished to find, in the "Edinburgh Review," July, 1845, an article which professes to be a review of the "Bokhara Victims," in which I am charged, sometimes directly, but more frequently by implication, with conduct and motives which, if the assertions of the anonymous writer were true, would render me a disgrace to the service in which I have served thirty-three years, and unworthy of associating with any honest man.

This production I lay at the door of the Foreign Office, although I am perfectly prepared to hear the Earl of Aberdeen declare that "neither the Secretary of State, nor the under-secretaries, nor any clerk connected with this office had, *as such*," anything to do with the article in question. I, however, maintain that the bantling was produced in the Foreign Office, and I think any one who will take the trouble of reading the following pages will be convinced that I am right; and should he have perused the Foreign Office correspondence in the "Bokhara Victims," he can have no difficulty in fixing upon the parents.

Should the reader be unacquainted with the "doings" of Downing Street, he will not be disposed to believe that Lord Aberdeen could ever sanction an anonymous publication; I will therefore give him a proof that this is not his Lordship's first offence. At a time when, from the intelligence brought from all quarters, the existence of our envoys appeared certain, and I had received the congratulations of his Lordship on the prospect of my "benevolent exertions being crowned with success," there appeared in a

newspaper a leading article intended to crush these hopes. From the manner in which some facts were suppressed, others garbled, and from the peculiarity of the false reasoning, I was satisfied that it came from the Foreign Office, and I wrote to Lord Aberdeen complaining of it, and reminding his Lordship that I published facts "without any special pleading, being quite sure that special pleading could never bring a dead man to life, although it might place a living one in his grave." This letter was not answered, but in a few days I had an interview with his Lordship; I put a plain question to him on the subject of the anonymous article, and he admitted that it was inserted with his sanction. The reader will also, probably, be disposed to say, "You have cut up the Foreign Office gentlemen very severely, Captain, in the 'Bokhara Victims,' and you ought not to complain that they attack you in return."

My good sir, I do not complain of their attacking me, but of the dishonest nature of their attacks. All I have written I have put my name to, and am prepared to take the responsibility of my actions; but my anonymous slanderers attack a man in the dark: like a serpent they bite his heel, and then sneak back to their slimy hole in Downing Street, not having the courage to justify their conduct.

I am accused of want of discretion and judgment; this is a perfectly fair subject for criticism, and I will not attempt to defend myself from the charge: I should, in fact, be proving my adversary's case were I to do so. The reader, however, is told that I am "not a man to hide my light under a bushel," and it is insinuated that I dishonestly hastened the publication of my book, as I knew Dr. Wolff had ascertained that the account furnished by Saleh Mohammed* was true, and that Lord Aberdeen and his colleagues had been right.

These insinuations have been fully answered by the publication of Dr. Wolff's "Narrative;" I shall, however, have a word to say on that subject by and by.

I am accused of inaccuracy in dates, and in having stated that Colonel Stoddart was sent to "*induce*" the Persians to raise the siege of Herat, when, according to the statement of the Foreign Office gentlemen, he was sent to "*demand*" it. Some inaccuracies in my account of Colonel Stoddart's official instructions on proceeding to Bokhara are also pointed out, and as the Reviewer says he has a copy of Colonel Stoddart's instructions before him, he certainly ought to be a better authority than I, and his pointing out that inaccuracy is perfectly fair.

Some time ago I informed Lord Aberdeen that Colonel Stoddart had not received any letters between July 1838 and June 1841, a period of three years. His Lordship immediately denied this, and stated that various communications had been received from Colonel Stoddart during that period. This was a flat contradiction. I, however, immediately sent to Lord Aberdeen Colonel Stoddart's original letter in his own handwriting, which contained this remarkable passage: "The obstacles which opposed me at the onset have melted like snow in the midsummer sun, slowly and surely, and I am now only waiting a letter from Government to leave the

* Dr. Wolff met at Meshed this Saleh Mohammed, and he thus speaks of him, vol. i. page 263:—"Saleh Mohammed told me that the two persons who were put to death, and of whom he gave a circumstantial account to Col. Sheil, might have been two other persons, and the executioner who told him the story might have belied him." Upon the statement of this man, of what others told him, the name of Stoddart was struck out of the Army List!

field we have won. I received a packet, for the first time since July 1838, last week," &c. This letter was dated Bokhara, 26th June, 1841. As it was possible that the gentlemen, in their "comfortably carpeted rooms in Downing Street," might be better acquainted with what was going on at Bokhara than Colonel Stoddart himself, I published the letter in the "Bokhara Victims," prefacing it with the following observation: "In laying it before the public I think it right to state, that when I communicated the original to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, I was officially informed that various communications had been received from Colonel Stoddart during the years 1839-40." I thus left the question to the reader's judgment without comment.

Here it is certain, that either Colonel Stoddart or the Secretary of State has asserted the thing that is not. I have seen none of the letters said by Lord Aberdeen to have been received, and on a question of veracity I must say, I would rather believe Colonel Stoddart than the Foreign Office, as I have never had occasion to suspect my friend's veracity, and I cannot say the same of the officials who have contradicted him.

I am now surprised to learn, that the dates I assigned to various events which occurred at Bokhara are stated to be inaccurate; my only reply is, that I shall be most happy to shew the Earl of Aberdeen my authority for every assertion contained in the "Bokhara Victims."

The Foreign Office gentleman refers to numerous letters said to have been sent to Bokhara, of which I made no mention; for the best of all possible reasons—because I never heard of them.

On the 23d June, 1843, a large mass of official documents was communicated to me, which I was told contained *every thing* relating to Colonel Stoddart. I expressed to Mr. Hammond, the clerk in attendance, my great astonishment that, among these documents, I could not find any thing to shew that a single effort had been made for the relief of my friend, or even to ascertain his fate; it was then that gentleman drew forth Lord Ellenborough's never-to-be-forgotten letter, claiming our envoys as "innocent travellers," which I instantly told Mr. Hammond would occasion the immediate execution of these wretched men, should it reach Bokhara.

Now, if all this time Government had been endeavouring to procure the release of my friend (which I beg leave to state I do not believe), surely I am not to be blamed for repeating, in good faith, the assertion I made to Mr. Hammond, which has never been denied. My account of occurrences at Bokhara may contain inaccuracies; I will, however, pledge my word as an officer and a gentleman, that, for every assertion therein contained, I have good authority, which I will shew to Lord Aberdeen when called upon so to do. Can I say more?

Suppose Lord Aberdeen were to get up in the House of Lords and say, "In reply to Captain Grover's accusation that our envoys at Bokhara were abandoned by the British Government, I will now communicate to your Lordships one fact, which state policy has obliged me to conceal: during the occupation of Cabul, Lord Ellenborough went himself to Bokhara disguised as a Callandar—having shaved off his eye-brows, (hear! hear!) he succeeded in releasing not only the "Victims," but fourteen other British officers, several Sepoys, and a drummer, who are all at this moment in safety at Loodianah." (tremendous cheers.)

Should such an agreeable announcement be ever ^{made}, how happy should I be to acknowledge myself in the wrong! I should, however,

consider myself perfectly free from reproach, as my accusation was made openly, in good faith, signed by my name, and had never been denied.

At page 153 the Reviewer says, "we shall first dispose of Captain Grover's assertion, that Colonel Stoddart might easily have left Bokhara if he had been furnished with permission to do so from any competent British authority." I beg leave to say the assertion is not mine, but Colonel Stoddart's, confirmed by Captain Abbott and General Peroffsky. When offered his liberty at the solicitation of Russia, Captain Abbott says "Colonel Stoddart's reply was, 'The Russians would, undoubtedly, treat me well; but when my own Government demands me, what will your highness answer?'" That the Ameer was much struck with the nobleness of such an answer from one who was a prisoner, and hourly in danger of death; and, taking off his rich cloak of sables, made them clothe Colonel Stoddart in it and lead him on horseback through Bokhara." Captain Abbott further states that General Peroffsky, whom he afterwards met in Russia, confirmed that fact. On my arrival at St. Petersburg last autumn, General Peroffsky was the first officer that called upon me: he stated that he never was at Bokhara; that he was Governor of Orenbourg, when, by direction of his Government, he demanded Colonel Stoddart's release as an innocent traveller, "*simple voyageur*." Colonel Stoddart was immediately set at liberty, but refused to owe his release to the solicitation of Russia. General Peroffsky assured me that, *had he been aware that Colonel Stoddart was a diplomatic agent, he could have had him brought to Orenbourg without the least difficulty*. And yet this anonymous Reviewer would deprive Colonel Stoddart of the glory due to his noble support of his country's honour, by pretending that he was a willing victim! And how is this attempted to be made out? There is given an extract from a letter dated 10th July, 1841, in which Colonel Stoddart says,—"I do not mean to stop for Conolly if I can be off before;" the interpretation I put upon this passage is this,—I do not mean to stop for Conolly if I receive "a letter from Government to leave the field we have won." We have decided proof, that on one occasion he refused liberty when offered, because he was waiting for an order from Government; and I cannot therefore imagine that, at a later period, he would have been disposed ingloriously to have left "the field he had won." I merely presume to place my opinion in opposition to the anonymous Reviewer's, and leave the impartial reader to form his own.

The Reviewer gives a long list of letters, said to have been written by various official personages on behalf of the envoys; all this may be true: I will only say that none such were exhibited to me when I was shewn *all* the documents at the Foreign Office. One letter, however, I knew was sent; the Reviewer says, "Lord Aberdeen wrote to the British Ambassador at Constantinople, instructing him to lose no time in urging the Sultan, and any other person who might have influence at Bokhara, to address letters to the Ameer, &c." I was perfectly aware of this kind effort of the Sultan, and I thus noticed it in the "Bokhara Victims:"—"Dr. Wolff has given me the following account of the fate of the Sultan's letter; it was forwarded by Colonel Sheil to Meshed, where Dr. Wolff found it with the other letters, and he saw one addressed by Colonel Sheil to the agent at Meshed, in which he is directed *not* to forward these letters by express, but, when an opportunity might occur, to send them *without* their envelopes. Now, every one at all acquainted with Oriental affairs well knows, that by removing the envelope and destroying the seal you cancel the letter; *with-*

out the seal the letter is valueless. The only opinion the agent at Meshed could form from this order must have been, that the British Government did not wish to hear any thing further on the subject, and that the British envoys were not worth the cost of an express."

When Dr. Wolff relates this fact in his published "Narrative," he innocently says,— "I am at a loss to guess the motives of Colonel Sheil."

At page 146 I find the following quoted as an extract from the "Bokhara Victims :"—

"In the year 1840, being at Algiers, some French officers made some remarks to me about the sacrifice of British diplomatic agents in Central Asia, to which I did not pay much attention.

"One day an old French general asked me if any recent intelligence had been received from the Bokhara captives. I replied, 'That I believed not; that I was most anxious about Colonel Stoddart, who was my friend; that the only consolation I had was the certain conviction that every means was being employed by the British Government for the relief of those unfortunate men.' The general gave me a peculiar look, and said, 'Did it never occur to you that these men were *intentionally sacrificed* by the British Government?' I now laughed outright. 'No, no, general; whatever sins of commission or omission the Government of '*perfidè Albion*' may have to answer for, the accusation of abandoning her public servants is one at which you must allow me to laugh.' The general, however, looked very serious, and replied, in a tone so slow and solemn, that I no longer smiled: 'Had these brave officers been Frenchmen, they would not have been allowed to linger in a dungeon at Bokhara. You seem to attach but little importance to what I say, but from what I have seen of your zeal and enthusiasm here in unmasking imposture I am quite sure that, if you are the friend of either of these wretched men, you will, at least, make some inquiries on the subject.'

"The general was right. I began to revolve in my mind all that I knew concerning my poor friend's mission; and when I returned to Nice my anxiety increased from day to day, and my nights were frequently passed without sleep, knowing, that whatever might be my friend's sufferings, he would be consoled with the certainty that he had, at least, *one friend* who would never give him up, who would never mourn for him as dead until he had absolute, positive proof.

"I began to entertain a vague idea that it might be possible, as the French general insinuated, that Colonel Stoddart had been sacrificed to some, to me incomprehensible, diplomatic object. The more I revolved in my mind these conversations with different officers, at places so widely separated as Florence and Algiers, my doubts and uneasiness increased.

"Many persons at St. Petersburg told me that Stoddart and Conolly had been intentionally abandoned by the British Government; but that they were still alive.

"Had Lord Aberdeen been desirous of obtaining any information concerning these wretched men, he would at any time have found a dozen volunteers well qualified and willing for the task; it is therefore clear that his Lordship did not wish to hear anything further on the subject.

"This abandonment of British officers will have a bad, a demoralising effect on the army and navy. That effect may not be apparent for some time, but as sure as the moisture that is drawn from the earth by evaporation will descend, so surely will the wicked, unnatural conduct of the British Government be visited upon the nation.

"What a thorough contempt will the tribes and governments of Central Asia have for '*Dowlat*,' as they call the British Government! The last attack upon Cabul raised us wonderfully in the estimation of these people; but should the cruelties practised upon Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly pass unavenged, the word '*Dowlat*' will have a new signification—contempt and infamy.

"Why Lord Aberdeen abandoned Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly to their wretched fate, I cannot form a conjecture; the reader will have seen that

French officers in Africa and Tuscany told me that these men were politically doomed. Now, without venturing to assert that that was the case, I do not hesitate to say, that if the English Government were really resolved upon the sacrifice of these brave envoys, they could not well have adopted more certain measures for their destruction."

Should the reader seek for the foregoing passage in the "Bokhara Victims," he will never find it as given in the "Edinburgh Review;" and yet all the above sentences are to be found in the book, but so scattered and so widely separated, that it took me, with the powerful instinct of an anxious parent, two hours to satisfy myself of the identity of these dislocated fragments of my own offspring.

Suppose now a critic were to take a statue of Phidias, make accurate casts of the different parts, and then arrange them in this way: place the head upon the trunk, suppressing the neck, then, without any legs clap on the feet, and criticise this "Guy" as the work of Phidias,—would this be considered fair? Would it be honest? This, however, is precisely the way the dishonest critic has dealt with the above quotation. Between the first paragraph and the second ten lines are omitted, in which the reader is transported, after a lapse of about a twelvemonth, from Algiers to Florence; and it was in fact at Florence, not at Algiers, where the French general made the above remarks, under circumstances which it is "expedient" for the Reviewer to omit. Between the fourth paragraph and the fifth one hundred and eighty pages are left out; between the fifth and sixth, nine are wanting; between the —. But I feel I need not weary the reader's patience; I have said enough to shew that this article could not have been written by an honest man. The respectable Editor of the "Edinburgh Review" has been deceived by the Downing Street gentlemen, who cannot even copy without garbling.*

The quotation has, however, been arranged in the above dishonest manner to answer the Reviewer's purpose, and he thus reasons upon it:—

"Thus, in the midst of declamations on the paramount importance of vindicating the honour of the nation at Bokhara, he does his best to brand it with infamy in Europe. In as far as depends upon him, he justifies every unprincipled talker from St. Petersburg to Naples, who, in the bitterness of national envy, may have sought, or may seek, to win the applause of a low *café* or a *caserne*, by a descant on the imputed iniquities of the *perfidé Albion!* They may all quote the testimony of Captain Grover, an Englishman and an officer in the British army, to justify any imputation of perfidy that may be cast upon his country. It is vain to say that he accuses not the nation but the Government. In all such questions the honour of the nation is bound up with the honour of the Government,—they cannot be parted; for there must be something base in the character of a nation whose ministers, be they of what party they may, chosen by a virtuous sovereign from the men most distinguished in their particular party for talent and integrity, and supported by a majority of the nation's representatives, could, even in their secret souls, contemplate the perpetration of such an atrocity as is here imputed to the British Government.

"It is not unimportant to observe that Captain Grover, before he had made any inquiry, at a time when he could not know anything of the measures the British Government might have taken to procure the release of the prisoners

* Other extracts from the "Bokhara Victims" will be found in the Review, "cooked" in the same dishonest manner.

at Bokhara—when he knew nothing but the fact of their continued detention—adopted these degrading suspicions at the suggestion of some French officers with whom he accidentally came in contact. One of these gentlemen, a French general, finding that his suggestions were at first received with indifference, compliments the captain on his ‘*zeal and enthusiasm* in unmasking impostures,’ and recommends him to inquire into the matter. This appeal was irresistible, and the poison began to take effect. The more he reflected on these conversations, the more did his doubts and uneasiness increase. His suspicions were therefore not the result of inquiry, or of any information, true or false. They existed prior to any inquiry, and then at least had no other foundation than the malignant surmises or insinuations of his French friends.”

The Foreign Office gentleman goes rather beyond his mark when he says, that the frequenters of low *cafés* and *casernes* “may all quote the testimony of Captain Grover, an Englishman, to justify any imputation of perfidy that may be cast upon his country.”

In this passage I only object to one small word, “any.”

If the Foreign Office Reviewer had said that the frequenters of low *cafés* or *casernes*, descanting “upon the iniquities” of the British Government in abandoning their diplomatic agents, Stoddart, Conolly, and Wyburd, might quote the testimony of Captain Grover, he would have written the exact truth. I allow the frequenters of those places to cite me as an authority; and should the subject be discussed, I trust they will do so. When, however, the Reviewer says, “the honour of the nation is bound up with the honour of the Government,—they cannot be parted,” I most respectfully differ from him.

The violation of private correspondence was dishonourable to the Government; certain transactions in the Colonial Office I consider disgraceful to the Government; and I might allude to the Ordnance Office, to conduct which would cast dishonour on the Government that tolerated it; and should these be countenanced by the nation, then the dishonour will attach to the nation; and should the nation not wipe out this stain, to which I will never cease pointing, then indeed will the nation be dishonoured. Lord Aberdeen and his subalterns are dishonouring the nation by their conduct. I, a poor half-pay captain, have brought my “candle from under the bushel,” and am anxiously looking for the means of wiping out the stain.

In the second paragraph the writer complains that my “suspicions were not the result of inquiry.” Who ever read such nonsense in the “Edinburgh Review?” “Suspicions the result of inquiry!” Without suspicion there would be no inquiry; it is the inquiry that is the result of the suspicion. I *suspected* the Government had abandoned Stoddart and Conolly, I made the *inquiry*, and that inquiry *confirmed my suspicion*.

As this passage contains an insinuation of my want of patriotism, and as I will yield to no man in love and devotion for my Queen and country, I am tempted once more to withdraw my “candle from under the bushel,” and inform the reader that, a few years since, when war with the United States of America appeared inevitable, I offered to raise a regiment for the service of my country at my own expense. My proposition was declined, but I received the thanks of the Commander-in-Chief. I mention this unimportant circumstance as an incentive to my friends at the Foreign Office. I perceive by the red book that there are about forty clerks, all of whom I believe have incomes superior to mine; now, if each of these gentlemen would promise to raise a regiment in case of

war, we should immediately have an army of 40,000 men, and the mere act would have such a moral influence, that the effect would be irresistible. If these gentlemen will only promise me to do this, I will pardon them for having sacrificed my friend Colonel Stoddart, and do my best to forget the past, and will endeavour to think of them with respect. I regret I shall not be able to add my regiment to the number, as the Foreign Office gentlemen have fleeced me too closely. At page 151 I find as follows:—

“Now, Captain Grover is greatly mistaken if he supposes that he is the only person who has inquired into these matters. There were other individuals who had as warm a regard for Colonel Stoddart, and took as keen and as anxious an interest in his safety as Captain Grover; and who commenced their inquiries long before he moved in the matter, and continued them up to the last moment when any doubt could reasonably be entertained. These inquiries were not the less diligent or searching because they were made without noise—without any attempt to attract public attention, or to win popular applause. They were enlivened by no altercation with the Foreign Office. No public meeting was called to listen to their revelations. They produced no book. They were pursued silently and sorrowfully, yet not without hope—sometimes faint and dim, sometimes stronger and brighter, till at length it was extinguished. The individuals who instituted these inquiries had no personal ambition to gratify, no preconceived opinions to maintain. And this must also be acknowledged, they had no suspicions of any foul design on the part of the Government to quicken their apprehension, or to prejudice their judgment. They sought anxiously to know, and they carefully and maturely examined what had been done, what was doing, and, so far as they were permitted, to be informed what was contemplated towards effecting the release of those noble-minded men, those faithful and unfortunate servants of their sovereign and their country. Their affections made them urgent and zealous; their anxiety made them watchful.”

With respect to the above extract I have only to say, that I am quite satisfied that the relatives of Col. Stoddart and Capt. Conolly employed the measures they thought best adapted to obtain the release of the victims; at the same time it is my sincere opinion, that had a clamour been raised at any period between 1839 and 1843, or had Dr. Wolff's first proposition, made in 1842, been accepted, these victims would have been saved: but I also think, that had this been done the Foreign Office would not have advised Her Majesty to grant the pensions to the relatives.

In my case, I applied for permission to proceed to Bokhara, to ascertain the fate of our envoys, at my own cost and on my own responsibility, asking only an order for Stoddart “to leave the field he had won.” This was done without any “flourish of trumpets;” and my proposition was not communicated by me to a single soul until it was thanklessly refused. My intention was to have proceeded with the greatest secrecy by Orenbourg, and, unless my expedition had been “crowned with success,” the attempt would probably never have been made known. The reader of the “Bokhara Victims” is aware that I endeavoured in vain to obtain an audience of Lord Aberdeen; while my proposition was rejected I was not even thanked, but my proposition was falsified; and on this being pointed out to the Under-Secretary of State he apologised, and asked leave to withdraw his letter, which was granted. My offer being thus ungraciously refused, I mentioned the circumstance only to my most intimate friends, whose advice I was seeking, about

proceeding to Bokhara without the Government sanction. Dr. Wolff's letter addressed to the officers of the army appeared. Having accepted the Doctor's proposal, and being sure that no voluntary assistance would be afforded by Government, I had to fight against the Downing Street authorities, and my weapons were publicity and the strength of public opinion. This obtained for me the interview with Lord Aberdeen which I had before sought in vain; and to this publicity, not to any willing assistance from the Foreign Office, do I attribute the return of Dr. Wolff. The Foreign Office gentlemen are annoyed that "my candle is brought from under the bushel," because it throws a light upon their disgraceful conduct. I am now slandered by these people, and the world is told that my motives are not those I have avowed, but "to bring my candle from under a bushel," and to seek notoriety and the honour of "martyrdom" with a "flourish of trumpets."

It is a common Downing Street manœuvre, when they meet with a troublesome antagonist, to attribute base motives to him. This is a very safe mode of attack, as it cannot be answered; they generally attribute pecuniary motives; as they could not do this in my case, they perhaps thought I might be trying for professional advancement; but here, to guard against such a suspicion, I had withdrawn my claim for promotion. What was left? I am surprised it did not occur to these gentlemen to say, that my object was to push Lord Aberdeen from his stool at the Foreign Office, and to take possession of it myself. This I should have found very difficult to deny with a grave countenance, as I really think my "candle" would be of some use in the dark chambers of the Foreign Office.

A Reviewer truly said that the Foreign Office had victimised me to the extent of four hundred pounds, a pair of gloves, and my promotion. These gentlemen, however, are not satisfied with "stealing trash," they now endeavour to rob me of my good name, which would much enrich them if they could get a portion of it, but which would make me poor indeed.

My money, gloves, and promotion I have relinquished, but my good name is worth a struggle.

The Foreign Office stoops to anonymous slander. How different was the conduct of the Rev. G. Stoddart, Col. Stoddart's nearest relative! He abused, "in good set terms," the members of the Committee who had exerted themselves to the utmost on behalf of his brother; he called them "*Satyrs*," and accused them of pretending a "posthumous" friendship: the reverend gentleman, however, when he indulged in this classical abuse, did not hide his head under a bushel, but published this, with his name, in a Norwich newspaper. I therefore republished the reverend gentleman's letter in the "Bokhara Victims," and gave it a place of honour by itself in the Appendix; and this I did without any comment.

My having pointed out the Geographical Ignorance of the Foreign Office pretenders, seems to have been keenly felt. Precautions are, however, being taken to prevent the recurrence of such blunders, and the reader will be gratified to learn that one of his Lordship's chief clerks is now on the Council of the Royal Geographical Society, and that I intend to propose that he shall have a permanent seat "officially as such." The error, after all, was very excusable. In their anxiety to announce the death of Col. Stoddart, which was stated to have taken place at Bokhara, they had not time to send out to inquire where that outlandish region might be. Saleh Mohammed, with all his

minuteness, gave no information on this point. As one of the messengers had been seen reading the "History of Shipwrecks," he was applied to; all he knew was, that it must be to the east of Herne Bay; so, as there was no time to be lost, they placed it boldly in *Persia*, being quite sure that no one would go there to look for it. Now, with my determination to support the national honour, the moment I saw, in the "Army List" for March 1843, that Bokhara was officially placed in *Persia*, I wrote to the Secretary at War a letter, in which I informed him that Bokhara had no more to do with Persia than with Russia or China; that it was an independent country, more than twice as big as England and Wales; and I entreated him, for the honour of the nation, not to have such a display of ignorance perpetuated in the "Annual Army List." I received a letter of thanks, and an assurance that the word Persia should be struck out; and it was so. After all, this was not a more serious blunder than if they had announced the death of an envoy as having occurred at Belgium in Switzerland, or at the Isle of Man in the county Tipperary. Lord Aberdeen may, however, console himself; such an example of geographical ignorance is not without a parallel. I have no doubt my friends at the Foreign Office are well acquainted with Lacroix, who was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the French republic; he was one of the Mountain party, and, if I recollect right, was Minister for Foreign Affairs in the year 1793 or 1794. He was known by the name of "l'imbecille Lacroix," and some of the blunders attributed to this man are *nearly* as bad as the one perpetrated by the British Foreign Office. "L'imbecille" supposed Tuscany to be a city, and that Naples was in the dominions of the King of Sardinia! A celebrated writer at the time thus expressed himself: "Tôt ou tard nous sentirons que ce n'est pas impunément que nous pouvons mettre un *imbecille* à la tête des affaires étrangères." (We shall find out sooner or later that we cannot with impunity place an imbecile as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.)

I beg the reader's attention to the following extract:—

"Now, if this is Captain Grover's conviction, can any thing be more abominable, more immoral as an international act, than to call upon the British nation to take vengeance on the King of Bokhara for a proceeding in which he is thus declared to be blameless? But Captain Grover goes further; he offers to give the aid of his personal services to depose this blameless ruler, and to carry all the horrors and atrocities of an Asiatic war among the people of Bokhara, on the *pretext* that their sovereign has injured and insulted the British nation; while in truth he believes that it is not their Sovereign but his own Government that is to blame. If, on the other hand, he has here said what is contrary to his conviction, we must doubt the sincerity of all the statements in which he denounces the conduct of the British Government. If he has here asserted what he does not himself believe, for the purpose of fixing dishonour upon his own Government, then the whole book may probably be of the same character.

"On which horn of the dilemma does he prefer being transfixed? We offer him the alternative. If he says he is sincere in acquitting the King of Bokhara, then he convicts himself of gross injustice, and disregard of international honour, in demanding that he should be attacked and punished for that of which he acquits him. If he denies that he is guilty of gross injustice, and disregard of international honour, in proposing to attack Bokhara, then he admits that her King is to blame, and that, in stating the contrary, he has asserted what he does not truly believe.

"This is the man who puts himself forward to teach the nation how to assert and maintain its honour! Truly, Captain Grover has studied the *jus gentium* at a German university to some purpose: we should like to know what seminary

had the honour of perfecting his diplomatic education, of which he boasts so confidently."

The Reviewer must have found it exceedingly difficult to make out any thing of a case, when he takes an open barefaced joke and treats it seriously. The chapter in the "Bokhara Victims" upon which the above extract is a commentary is headed, "Defence of an absent Individual," and is a mere pleasantry. The writer of the Review is not quite such an ass as to mistake thistles for clover; it was, however, "*expedient*" thus to misunderstand it.

This chapter was intended to shew that the conduct of the British Government had been so very bad, that even the tyrant of Bokhara might plead that conduct as his justification. The joke was probably a stupid one, and, as the Foreign Office slanderer pretends to have received it as serious, I will allow him to consider it so; and, refusing either of the Reviewer's horns which he so obligingly offers me, I will pass between them, slide down the anonymous gentleman's back, and inflict a very gentle diplomatic kick upon his "tinderness" *in transitu*, as they say in Connaught. I therefore pose the theorem thus:—

Admitted (for the sake of argument) that the conduct of the British Government in disavowing their envoys, by claiming them on two occasions—by the Governor of Orenbourg, General Peroffsky, and by the Governor-General of India, Lord Ellenborough, as "innocent travellers," and other acts unnecessary to enumerate, justified him in putting to death Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly according to the laws of Bokhara; I have now to prove that the honour of Great Britain requires that he should be punished for his treatment of the Bokhara Victims.

In reviewing the "Bokhara Victims," the Foreign Office gentlemen have found it expedient not to allude to Victim No. 3, Lieutenant Wyburd, whose case being the most extraordinary of all I separated from the others. I will lay this now before the reader in as few words as possible, all the official documents relating to it having been published at length in the work the Foreign Office gentlemen were professing to review.

My attention had not been called to Lieutenant Wyburd* until I heard of Dr. Wolff's departure from Tehran. I immediately wrote to that gentleman authorising him to ransom Lieutenant Wyburd at my cost, and I laid before the Committee of the Stoddart and Conolly Fund a letter I proposed sending to Lord Aberdeen: I informed his Lordship that Lieutenant Wyburd had been sent, in the year 1835, on a secret mission to Khiva, and had not since been heard of. A member of the Committee on hearing the proposed letter, naturally asked whether it would not be better to inform Lord Aberdeen, as I had informed the Committee, upon what authority I stated that Lieutenant Wyburd was employed on a secret mission. My reply was to this effect: "From the manner the Foreign Office have suppressed and garbled intelligence, I am fully persuaded, as they will never guess the source of my information, that they will flatly

* In March 1838, a Gholam reported to Col. Sheil that a man had been murdered near Astrabad. Col. Shiel immediately wrote to the Foreign Office, stating that he was "*inclined to believe*" that this could be no other than Lieut. Wyburd. From this time Lieut. Wyburd was "overlooked," *i.e.* the name of this talented officer was struck out of the list, and his important services were forgotten. Now we know that Wyburd reached Bokhara in safety, and the Gholam's story was just as true as that of the "prepossessing" Saleh Mohammed.

deny that Lieutenant Wyburd was sent on a secret or any mission to Khiva, but state that he went as an *innocent traveller*: I wish you would allow me to put the veracity of the Foreign Office to this crucial test, and should it appear that I have injured the officials by suspecting them of conduct so infamous, I will enter an apology upon our minutes." Within two days the Committee met again, and I read Lord Aberdeen's reply amidst shouts of laughter, as it fulfilled my prediction to the letter, and we had before us evidence, that not only was the importance of Lieutenant Wyburd's mission known at the Foreign Office, but that it was well known at the India House and to the Indian Government! In reply, I sent Lord Aberdeen an extract from a letter written by *the minister* who sent Lieutenant Wyburd. Acknowledging this, Lord Aberdeen asked permission to correct the "*error*," and coolly said Lieutenant Wyburd had been "*overlooked*." These are the people who, behind the blue and yellow cover of the "*Edinburgh Review*," will slander an honest soldier, and go whining about that he has "*cast a slur*"* upon their office. I think I have avoided the horns of the dilemma.

As the anonymous slanderer expresses a desire "*to know what seminary had the honour of perfecting my diplomatic education*," I beg leave to tell him, that if he will bring his light from under the bushel and let me see his "*frontispiece*," or favour me with his name, I shall be happy to afford him that information.

With respect to the guarantee chapter, the Reviewer says:—

"We have already occupied more than our allotted space, and cannot now enter upon an examination of the Captain's correspondence with the Foreign Office about the bill drawn upon him by Dr. Wolff, in which there appears to us to be nothing so prominent as his desire to be made a martyr to the extent of 400*l.*—and, like other martyrs, to let the world know it."

If it were not for two considerations, I would have this transaction of the Government of Great Britain proclaimed at the corner of every street in the three kingdoms with a flourish of trumpets: the first of these considerations is the vulgar one of the expense; the second, the reflection that the anonymous calumniators are lost to all sense of honest shame.

Having written this sentence, I gave an impatient kick under the table with my right foot, as if there had been some one there to receive it; I upset a chair loaded with books, and the first I picked up was Democritus, open at this passage. (I think it right to state that the Democritus from which I make the extract is not the Greek philosopher who flourished about 400 years before Christ, but Democritus junior, who flourished some 200 years ago. I am anxious to be correct in my chronology, that the gentlemen of the Foreign Office may not cry out with one voice, "*Haro sur le baudet!*")

Thus writes my good friend Democritus:—

"I know there be many base, impudent, brazen-faced rogues, that will, *nullâ pallescere culpâ*, be moved with nothing, take no national infamy or disgrace to heart, laugh at all; let them be proved perjured, stigmatised, convict rogues, thieves, traitours, lose their ears, be whipped, branded, carted, pointed at, hissed, reviled and derided, (with Ballio the

* A short time since some fraudulent bill-discounters were prosecuted to conviction at the Middlesex Sessions; on being asked what they had to say why sentence should not be passed, the head of the gang complained that Mr. Goode, the prosecutor, "*had cast a slur*" on the respectability of the firm!

baud in Plautus); they rejoyce at it; *cantores probos! babæ! and bombax!* what care they? we have too many such in our times."

I will now, in as few words as possible, lay before the reader this disgraceful affair of the guarantee. Colonel Sheil writes to know whether he should be allowed to make advances to Dr. Wolff at Bokhara in case of necessity, and complains that he has not received any instructions on that point. This letter is communicated to me, and I am told that security will be required for such advances; I gave Lord Aberdeen a guarantee, making myself personally liable to the extent of 500*l.*, and a bill for 400*l.* drawn in favour of the British Envoy at Tehran is presented to me from the Foreign Office. I observe that this bill, although drawn in favour of Colonel Sheil, does not bear that gentleman's endorsement. The name of Mr. Bandinel, Lord Aberdeen's chief clerk, is, however, pointed out to me on the back of the bill, and I pay the money and get back my guarantee. From this arises a correspondence; his Lordship invites me to the Foreign Office, and, without any explanation, has the coolness to offer to repay me all I had expended for Dr. Wolff's mission, and the hand of friendship to boot, accompanied, however, by the insulting condition that I would withdraw two letters in which I state that "a Dr. Wolff might as easily have been found in 1840, 1841, or 1842, as in 1843; that Dr. Wolff's danger arose from his not having been furnished with authority to claim our envoys; and that, if your Lordship had done your duty, those brave and faithful envoys would not have been allowed to linger during those years in captivity."

My reply to Lord Aberdeen's proposal was this: "If your Lordship is as happy at saving the 400*l.* as I am in paying them, and restoring Dr. Wolff to his country, then indeed are we two happy men." I was too indignant to hear his Lordship's reply, but rushed from the tempter minus a pair of gloves. It really was "too bad" to expose a poor half-pay captain to such a temptation. All this I have related at length, for the edification of the nation, in the "*Bokhara Victims*;" I, however, suppressed one document—it was so thoroughly disgraceful that I was ashamed of it; this was the bill extorted from Dr. Wolff at Bokhara by the Naib (the king's lieutenant), and which was the origin of the whole affair. Dr. Wolff has however published this document, and here it is:—

"In the garden of the infamous Nayeib, Abdul Samut Khan, surrounded by his banditti, and compelled by him, I write that he forced from me a note of hand for six thousand tillahs.

JOSEPH WOLFF, Prisoner."

Is it to be believed that the envoy at Tehran could allow a bill like the above to be paid? Lord Aberdeen ought to be aware that the whole *corps diplomatique* at Tehran speak of this transaction with disgust. The Russian minister, Count de Médem, told Dr. Wolff that if such a claim had been made upon a Russian subject, it would have been paid with a stick, and the claimant would have been "kicked down stairs."* In requiring a guarantee, Lord Aberdeen committed a great blunder. I can sincerely assure his Lordship that I am by no means desirous of being "made a martyr to the extent of 400*l.*," and that, although I shall never ask to be repaid, I shall never refuse the cost of Dr. Wolff's ransom, provided there be no degrading condition tacked to it. I have a

* At page 96, vol. ii., Dr. Wolff says, "he (Colonel Sheil) ought to have seen that the promise was extorted from a poor prisoner who had death before his eyes."

letter now before me, in which Lord Aberdeen tells me that I am "fairly entitled to be relieved from any personal loss" on account of Dr. Wolff's mission, and yet, after this plain avowal, his Lordship withholds from me that to which I am "fairly entitled." I leave these two facts to make their own impression on the public. Six thousand tillahs are three thousand pounds. I should like very much to know by what process Col. Sheil contrived to reduce that claim so as to bring it within the limits of my guarantee.

The anonymous writer has the effrontery to say that Dr. Wolff has ascertained the truth of Saleh Mohammed's statement, that Colonel Stoddart had been put to death in 1842, and that I had hurried my publication to anticipate the Doctor's contradiction. Really the writer must have most consummate impudence to make this assertion with the work before him which he pretends to review. At page 275 in the Second Edition of the "Bokhara Victims," a copy of which I delivered myself to one of the Messrs. Longman, for the Editor of the "Edinburgh Review," some weeks before the publication of the calumnious article, will be found Dr. Wolff's official statement, taken from the minutes of the Committee. I here reproduce an extract from it:—

"He heard various versions of the story of the murder of the British envoys, no two of which agreed; some people stated they were alive five months ago (December 1843); others, eleven months (July 1843). Abbas Kouli Khan, the Persian ambassador at Bokhara, said they were positively alive eleven months ago (July 1843); therefore if they were executed it must have been about, or after, the time stated in the official letter, a translation of which in Persian was sent to the king, that is, July 1843, at which period there can be no doubt they were alive. * * * Dr. Wolff stated that all his sufferings at Bokhara arose from his not having letters from the English Government."

Since the publication of the "Edinburgh Review," Dr. Wolff's book has appeared. I looked for it with great anxiety. The reader will probably be surprised to learn that I did not see a single chapter of that work until it appeared in print. I knew Dr. Wolff intended to spare the Government, and, as I knew also that he was a man of truth, my curiosity was great to learn how this could be done. Having read Dr. Wolff's "Narrative," I must say that the facts therein related are more damnatory to the present ministry than any thing contained in the "Bokhara Victims."

My impression on reading Dr. Wolff's book is, that the British Government did not wish to hear anything further of their envoys, or of my envoy, as the "Edinburgh Review" calls Dr. Wolff. The poor Doctor says, at page 120, vol. ii. :—

"I must say I cannot understand why Colonel Sheil refused to give me a letter to the King of Bokhara, whilst he gave me two letters of introduction, the one for Haje Ibrahim, Abdul Samut Khan's brother, a most consummate villain, and another for Abdul Sumut Khan himself."

At page 182 I find,—

"It will always remain to me an enigma why Colonel Sheil, though he admitted that Abdul Samut Khan was a villain, and though he was unfavourably impressed with the appearance of Haje Ibrahim, nevertheless would never enter into details about him; and when I recommended him to get full information of the infamous character of Abdul Samut Khan from Mirza Abdul Wahab, he actually turned, in a rude and insulting manner, from Abdul Wahab. My estimate of Colonel Sheil's character will be fully established by every Englishman that knows him. His bilious maladies, however, and gout,

must plead an apology for all this. * * * He knew fully, as well by Abbas Kouli Khan as by myself, how villanously I was treated by Dil Assa Khan, but he never for one moment thought of getting me any redress, or of punishing him."

At page 197 we read,—

"I cannot, also, but remark, that the kindness shewn to me by the Russian ambassador at Tehraun was unbounded; so much so, that even Mullah Mehdee, the Jew, and persons in authority at Tehraun, observed, that 'the Russians are by far kinder to you than your own people, the English!' I have good authority to say, that, *had I been a Russian subject, the Russian Government would not have suffered me to pay one farthing to Abdul Samut Khan's brother.*"

Of course not! Colonel Sheil had, however, been made aware that the money would come from my coffers.

Colonel Sheil did not give Dr. Wolff any letter, but he sent a present to the king. The Assoof-ood-Dowlah also forwarded by Dr. Wolff a present of five hundred tomawns (250*l.*). What does the reader think was the present from "Dowlat," Great Britain? A silver watch worth fifteen shillings, and three pieces of cloth! Dr. Wolff values the whole at 6*l.* I really am surprised that the king did not chop off Dr. Wolff's head at once for insulting him by such a present. All at Bokhara were astonished that he did not do so; and Colonel Sheil, at Tehran, had he reflected on the subject, must have been as much astonished as any one. Dr. Wolff's book contains a long list of complaints, unnecessary to quote. I must, however, mention that Colonel Sheil detained Lord Ellenborough's letter, notwithstanding Dr. Wolff's written remonstrance; and the Doctor says, page 197, vol. ii.—"Colonel Sheil, beside that, did not send forward to Captain Grover the note of Sir R. Shakespeare which accompanied Lord Ellenborough's letter."

When Colonel Sheil heard of Dr. Wolff's intended mission, he sent a messenger to Bokhara, who arrived there two months before Dr. Wolff. In the Doctor's "Narrative," p. 220, he thus alludes to this fact,—“Now, I must say, if such a thing had been done immediately on the imprisonment of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, such a measure would certainly have saved their lives. Therefore, as I am now in England, and reflect on these points more coolly, I cannot but blame Colonel Sheil for having delayed the adoption of so strong a measure until I was *en route*, and when he knew I was *en route*. My readers will have observed that I speak of Colonel Sheil with all the gratitude I owe to him, and with a due sense of his personal kindness to me; but still a portion of his conduct with regard to these gentlemen will always remain, I fear, something mysterious.”

The reader will be puzzled to understand why the Foreign Office is so anxious to make it appear that our envoys were put to death in 1842, not in 1843. In a pamphlet called “An Appeal to the British Nation,” published in 1843, I wrote as follows,—

“I inform his Lordship that he will be held personally responsible for any disaster that may now befall these gallant fellows; and, should they be sacrificed, their blood must lie on the conscience of my Lord Aberdeen.”

When I wrote these words, Stoddart and Conolly *were both alive!* *

* The reader will find at the end of this work the King of Bokhara's official letter, in which he declares that he murdered the envoys in *July* 1843. On the 13th of *June* in that year, I volunteered to go to Bokhara at my own expense, and was refused!

Do I now ask for vengeance for the cruel neglect of these meritorious officers? Does the troubled spirit of my poor murdered friend cry aloud for vengeance? Far from it! and if I reprint that sentence, it is only with a hope that it may act upon the conscience and feelings of the Earl of Aberdeen and future Secretaries of State, and induce them, before they send brave and intelligent officers on distant and perilous missions, to consider how they are to get back; and, having once sent them, to bear in mind that they are never to be abandoned.

Individual crimes often go apparently unpunished,—I say apparently, because even Secretaries of State may have consciences, and “that within that passeth show:” it is a kind dispensation of Providence, that, as punishment is sure to reach us in the next world for our crimes in this, we are often allowed time for repentance. But with national crimes, national wickedness, it is not so. In the course of my historical reading (which I am sorry to say has not been very extensive) I have not met with a single instance, from the ancient Sodom and Gomorrah down to modern France, in which national crimes have not been followed by national punishment.

Lord Aberdeen is not, however, so much to blame as the office. When I complained to his Lordship of the unfair special pleading in his official correspondence, his Lordship apologised for it, and told me that he could not read all the letters that were submitted to him. No wonder the anonymous Reviewer should complain that Lord Aberdeen should “peril the dignity of his official station” in seeking an interview with men of my “class.” No doubt whatever, Lord Aberdeen not only perilled but lost his dignity when he estimated my “class” so low as to think I could pocket a bribe of 400*l*. On my refusal I am sure his Lordship felt that his “class” was far inferior to mine.

At page 163 I find the following:—“And while he (Capt. Grover) refuses to believe the king’s intimation, or Dr. Wolff’s official assurances, that the execution took place at all, with whimsical inconsistency he determines to maintain, at all hazards, the accuracy of the date his highness assigns to this event.” What I have said is this:—“The account upon the faith of which the Government struck the name of Colonel Stoddart out of the ‘Army List’ is *proved to be false* by the evidence of Saleh Mohammed himself; and that *if* the execution took place as officially communicated by the king to me, then the date of that execution is July 1843.” I have distinctly stated in the “Bokhara Victims,”—“I wish the reader not to misunderstand me. I do not presume to say that our envoys are alive,—merely that the evidence of their death is far from satisfactory.” When I published Dr. Wolff’s letter which mentioned the murder of Mr. Todwise, Lieut. Wyburd, and others, I added in a note, to calm a little the anxiety of the relatives, that it remained to be seen upon what evidence Dr. Wolff’s statement was founded. Shortly after I received a copy of a letter addressed by the Doctor to Col. Sheil, in which he said, the King of Bokhara did not attempt to justify the murder of Mr. Todwise. At this time I was applied to for my opinion as to the truth of Mr. Todwise’s execution. My reply was, that I could form no opinion on the subject; that it rested upon the same evidence as that of the murder of Stoddart and Conolly,—the assertion of the Naib and the King of Bokhara. On Dr. Wolff’s arrival at Tehran, to his great astonishment, he met the murdered Mr. Todwise walking in the street. Dr. Wolff conversed with this gentleman, and ascertained beyond

any doubt that he had not been murdered, and that there was not the slightest foundation for the report. Had not the Doctor met Mr. Todwise, he could have had no more doubt of his murder than of that of Stoddart, Conolly, and Wyburd. The evidence of the death is the same. So anxious is the King of Bokhara to be thought the murderer of British subjects, that if Dr. Wolff had asked him why he put Lord Ellenborough to death, I am quite sure neither the King nor the Naib would have attempted to deny or justify the atrocity.

The Foreign Office Reviewer not only states he has a copy of Colonel Stoddart's official instructions before him, and gives an account of a voluminous official correspondence, but he pretends to be acquainted with Dr. Wolff's correspondence with his wife. As all Dr. Wolff's letters passed through the Foreign Office, the Foreign Office Reviewer may be well acquainted with every word the Doctor wrote, and with every syllable that was addressed to him; but when he assumes that I also am acquainted with the letter to which he refers, he makes a great mistake. All Lady Georgiana's letters passed through my hands; and if I assure the Foreign Office gentleman that I never peeped into any one of them, he will probably laugh at my Gothic notions of propriety.

The Reviewer accuses me of dishonestly "keeping out of sight important facts." He says that, in the very same journal in which Dr. Wolff mentions having seen Lord Ellenborough's letter at Bokhara, he also distinctly states that the Ameer, or King, had not seen it when he, Dr. Wolff, arrived at Bokhara; that it had been intercepted, and returned to Balkh; that it was in consequence of Dr. Wolff's own representations that a messenger was sent to bring it from thence; that it was brought accordingly, and that thereafter the King of Bokhara saw it for the first time. "This information Captain Grover has not thought fit to mention; there is not in his volume one single sentence that could lead us to suspect its existence! On these facts likewise we must decline to make any observation."

I have, however, an observation or two to make, which will shew the absurdity of the above extract.

Dr. Wolff mentioned in his letter to me, that when he asked the Naib about Lord Ellenborough's letter, he pretended he had never heard of it; then said it was at Balkh, and he would send a messenger for it. After some time the messenger was said to have returned, and the letter was given to Dr. Wolff, who, observing that it had been opened, was told that the messenger had fallen from his horse, and broken the seal. When Dr. Wolff wrote this statement to me, he added, that he did not believe it; for he knew that the messenger who it was said had been sent to Balkh had not left Bokhara.

This statement has, I perceive, been urged as a defence of Lord Ellenborough! Lord Ellenborough *fired the shot, and whether the shot reached the victim or no the crime is the same.* That the letter reached the king, however, we have ample evidence.

How could Hajee Ibrahim, at Meshed, have known the precise contents of the letter, had it been intercepted at Balkh? Dr. Wolff in his "Narrative" relates the effect the arrival of this letter had upon the King, according to Hajee Ibrahim. "Then a letter came from the Sultan. The Ameer cast it away with disdain, and said, 'The Sultan is half a kafir (infidel). I want a letter from the Queen of England.'

Some time after a letter arrived from the *Sirkar of Hind* (the Governor-General). ‘This letter,’ said he, with a sneer, ‘stated that *Stoddart and Conolly were innocent travellers*. Upon which the Ameer was so angry, that he put both to death; and I have this account from my brother, *Abdul Sumat Khan*’ (the King’s lieutenant and commander-in-chief). I beg the reader to remark this point with respect to this important letter, which, on my return to Teheraun, when Hajee Ibrahim came thither for the money which he claimed for Abdul Samut Khan, he boasted, in the presence of Mr. Glen, one of the attachés of the British embassy, to have mentioned to me, and then repeated all the above conversation at Meshed verbatim, especially relative to Lord Ellenborough’s letter.”—Dr. WOLFF’s *Narrative*, vol. i. p. 250. In the same volume, p. 279, I find:—“The sensation created at Bokhara by the letter of Lord Ellenborough I learn was extraordinary. The Khan expected a direct communication from the Queen, and was greatly irritated by not receiving it.” Dr. Wolff wrote this a few days before reaching Bokhara. Again, at page 290, I find, “The Ameer evidently viewed it as a deadly affront, that the letter he wrote to the Queen was answered by Lord Ellenborough.” Now, had this letter not reached the King, how could its contents have been known to Hajee Ibrahim at Meshed, and to the people Dr. Wolff met between Merve and Bokhara? It appears to have been a notorious document. Reflecting upon these facts, I am now rather more disposed to believe that Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were put to death in July 1843, according to the Ameer’s official declaration to me, and that it was in consequence of the receipt of Lord Ellenborough’s letter. The moment I saw that letter in Mr. Hammond’s office, in June 1843, I told him, that if it reached its destination all our exertions were useless. For the sake of Lords Aberdeen and Ellenborough, I wish I could believe Stoddart and Conolly alive; for the sake of the victims, I wish I could believe them dead. Dr. Wolff’s statement is now before the world, and the public will form their opinion.

The Reviewer sums up the principal charges I have made against the Queen’s servants, and appears to be surprised that I have dedicated the book to the Queen. My object, as I stated, was to call Her Majesty’s attention to facts of which I am sure she is kept in ignorance; in doing so, I thought I was doing the duty of a good subject. I was desirous of sending a copy of the book to Her Majesty, and applied through the regular channel: my request was neither refused nor granted; it was evaded. I therefore entreat the reader to believe that our good and gracious Queen is still ignorant of the facts contained in this pamphlet.

I have no doubt some patriotic peer or member of parliament will take up the matter; I shall not solicit any one. I have conscientiously performed my duty; and, leaving the affair to others, I quietly replace my candle under the bushel, from which I regret having been obliged ever to bring it forth.

JOHN GROVER,

Captain Unattached.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

THE KING OF BOKHARA'S OFFICIAL ACCOUNT OF THE MURDER OF THE BRITISH ENVOYS.

(Official.)

Bokhara, May 5, 1844.

To Captain Grover.

SIR,

I write this letter in the house of *Nayeb Samet Khan*, the chief of the Artillery, and the arsenal of his Majesty the King of Bokhara, a sincere and excellent friend of the British nation, but in the presence also of his majesty the Ummeer's mahram (private chamberlain); and I write this letter officially, *by order of the King of Bokhara*, to whom I give a translation of the letter, and, therefore, confine myself only to the *most necessary topics*, without comment, and without any observation from my part.

Firstly, on the 29th April the king stated to me by medium of the above-named *Nayeb*, and in the presence of *Mullah Kasem*, the king's mahram (private chamberlain) *that he put to death* in the month of *Sarratan** 1259, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly. The first had been put to death, firstly, on account of his having treated royalty with the greatest disrespect on different occasions; secondly, that he had turned Mussulman and then returned to the Christian faith; thirdly, that he had promised to get letters from England, and fourteen months had elapsed without receiving any answer, though the king had erected *japar khanas* (post-houses) on his account. And with regard to Conolly, that he had been put to death for having induced the khans of Khiva and Kokan to wage war against the King of Bokhara, &c.

His majesty has given me permission to leave Bokhara on the 9th May, *i. e.* Friday next.

I am, Sir,

Your humble and obedient servant,

JOSEPH WOLFF,

Mullah of England.

* I have the authority of the Turkish embassy for stating that *Sarratan* 1259 is, according to the Christian calendar, July 1843.—J. G.

No. II.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE STODDART
AND CONOLLY FUND ON THE SUBJECT OF THE GUARANTEE (SEE
PAGE 14).

"March 10th, 1845.

"The Committee having considered all the correspondence that has taken place between Captain Grover and the Foreign Office on the subject of the guarantee required by her majesty's government as an indemnity for any expense the release of Dr. Wolff, who was despatched from this country in search of her majesty's envoys, might cost the nation, think it due to Captain Grover to place the following opinion on the Minutes of the Committee:—

"Resolved unanimously,

"That the offer of the payment of 400*l.* to Captain Grover, as an inducement to withdraw his letters of the 25th and 28th February, left Captain Grover, who was acting, not merely for himself, but for the Committee, no alternative but to decline that proposition; and that Captain Grover had a right to complain that sufficient deference had not been paid in making it to the feelings of an officer in his position.

"Captain Grover is requested to communicate the above resolution to the Right Honourable the Earl of Aberdeen."

LONDON:

GEORGE BARCLAY, CASTLE STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE.

